



## Thinking of Applying to Conduct Research at the Jamaica Bay Unit of Gateway National Recreation Area?

To conduct research at any national park, you must provide a study plan and complete an application at the website: [www.science.nature.nps.gov/research](http://www.science.nature.nps.gov/research). Follow the basic outline for a research proposal to streamline the review process.

Each national park is slightly different in how it reviews research proposals, given that the parks have different issues and types of fragile resources, include wilderness or not, are remote or not, and so on. The following tips are offered to minimize the time it takes to review your proposed project.

### Tips for Writing Research Proposals for Quickest Turnaround Review

#### **(1) Why in the Jamaica Bay Unit of Gateway National Recreation Area?**

Be sure you justify why it is important to your research outcome that you conduct your research in Jamaica Bay. Why not somewhere else nearby?

#### **(2) Provide Gateway- specific methods, with specific information about sites, methods, and impacts**

Taking the time to provide more information now is in your own best interest. For example, turning in your NSF proposal, where you list desired work in many parks, but give no specific information about your proposed work in Jamaica Bay, is a sure way to delay your project and cause frustration for everyone involved. The more information you can provide with your initial proposal, the more quickly your request can be processed.

#### **(3) Minimize requests that create disturbance to park resources or values**

The objective of review is to welcome quality research, but balance the value of research gain with any potential research disturbance to park resources (e.g., disturbance to vegetation, wildlife, or soils), park values (e.g., wilderness, viewsheds) and to other users of the park (e.g., visitors, other researchers with established projects). Describe how the potential disturbances are important to your research findings, and suggest ways to mitigate any disturbance. For example, think about ways you can minimize private vehicle use on the road, the amount of collecting, or while still not compromising your research.

#### **(4) Is a visitor allowed to do what you'd like to do?**

The reality is that the fewer requests you make for special allowances that are different than the activities of the general public, the quicker your request will generally be processed and the more likely it will be to be approved.

# **Tips for Writing Research Proposals for Quickest Turnaround Review (SPECIFIC)**

## ***Study Site Information***

### **Where exactly in Jamaica Bay will your work occur?**

The earlier reviewers know exactly where you want to work, the more quickly we can determine the level of complexity your project entails. A simple map can save a great deal of time. For example, concerns may vary depending on the area in which you are planning to do your work such as marsh areas, areas that have been found to contain threatened or endangered species, or developed areas.

### **Are you asking for entry into closures?**

What justification do you have for wanting to enter closed or sensitive areas? How long are you requesting to remain in the area? Under what conditions (time, date, limits)? What effect will your entry have on the reason for the closure? What mitigation can you offer to offset this intrusion?

## ***Logistics and Park Assistance- Including Transportation and Access***

### **Are you intending to use a private vehicle for access to areas within the park?**

If you feel your project needs private vehicle access to be successful, provide ample justification for your road access request. When do you want to use a private vehicle? How many trips? Why can't you reach the area on foot?

- Economics, efficiency, and convenience are not necessarily sufficient reasons for allowing motorized access in wilderness or wilderness suitable lands. The benefit of the information to be gathered must be shown to outweigh the impacts caused by the use of motorized access or tools.
- What type of motorized equipment/tools are you proposing to use on your project? How much use? When? Where? Have you have requested the minimum amount of motorized equipment/tools you actually need to complete your project? What steps have you taken to reduce the amount of this use to the minimum necessary to accomplish your project?

### **Are you requesting park assistance?**

If you are expecting park assistance in logistics or research support? If so, make these requests clear in your proposal. If you are requesting any assistance from the park beyond what a normal park visitor would be given, please include specific information on:

- Are you asking for computer access for email, or a computer to work on, do you need desk or table space for processing specimens, do you need freezer space, do you need temporary storage. Do you need access to a fax machine or copier?
- Do you need to borrow equipment? Which equipment? How long will you need it?
- Will you need the Jamaica Bay Institute Research Vessel? Do you have an MOCC certified operator or will you need the park to supply one?

## *Equipment, Sampling, Marking, and Collections*

### **Do you need to temporarily or permanently mark study sites?**

If your plans are to mark study sites, be sure to indicate this in your proposal:

- Why do you need to mark sites? What other alternatives were considered, and why won't they work?
- What is the benefit of understanding the area? Is the benefit greater than then the cost (disturbance to wilderness)?
- Where exactly will you place markers? How long? How many? What type of marker? What color?

### **Are you intending to mark/radio collar animals?**

- Why do you need to mark or collar? What other alternatives were considered, and why won't they work?
- Why is the level of information gained from marking collaring important or critical to the needs of the park or science in general? How is the benefit of this information greater than then the cost?
- Where do you propose to mark or collar animals? How many animals? For how long? What type of marker? What color marker or collar?

### **Are you intending to establish remote sampling equipment such as weather stations, stream gauges, cameras, etc.?**

- Why do you need to these installations? What other alternatives were considered, and why won't they work? Is the benefit greater than the cost?
- How many installations? Where exactly would these installations be? How long would they remain there? What type of equipment?

### **Will you dig holes or disturb the ground surface?**

Ground disturbance can trigger the need for archeological clearance so it is critical to have specific information to evaluate if this is needed, or approval delays will occur.

- What kind of ground disturbance or digging do you propose? Exactly where would the digging occur? How many holes? How deep, wide? Would the soil or top layer be replaced? How will the impact be mitigated?

**Are you intending to collect specimens or objects?**

- Why is the collection of these specimens or objects absolutely needed for your project? Why does this collecting have to be done in Gateway, why can't you use reference specimens from somewhere else? What other alternatives to making new collections did you consider?

- Where do you propose to collect? When? How many?

- What kind of disturbance will take place as a result of sample removal? Why does the proposed collection not represent a significant impact to the park? How do you intend to mitigate any disturbance?

- Will the collections be destroyed in analysis? If not, where will they be stored? What commitment do you have from the institution where you propose that they be stored that they are willing to curate specimens to NPS standards?